

Perseverance And Discipline

*"Dirty Words", Part 4 of 10
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I) PERSPECTIVE ON LIFE

Our culture is dominated by the perspectives of convenience and disposability. We could perhaps summarize these cultural attitudes in two statements:

- 1) If it's not _EASY_ for me – something must be wrong and I deserve better.**
- 2) If I'm not _HAPPY_ with something – it's OK to just get rid of it and get something else which does make me happy.**

God's word teaches us a much different attitude towards life - one focused on perseverance and discipline.

- 1) Perseverance: a steady _PERSISTENCE_ in a course of action, especially in spite of difficulties, challenges, or discouragement.**
- 2) Discipline: a behavior and order maintained by _TRAINING_ and control**

II) PERSPECTIVE FROM GOD'S WORD

Key questions to consider as we review Nehemiah 4:

- 1) What tactics does the enemy use to dissuade us from God's plan for our life?**
- 2) How should we respond to remain faithful to God – to persevere in the face of opposition?**

Tactic #1: The enemy will attempt to have us _DOUBT_ God

"When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews, and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, 'What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble—burned as they are?'" Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, "What they are

building—if even a fox climbed up on it, he would break down their wall of stones!"
(Nehemiah 4:1-3),NIV

Response #1: We must _TRUST_ in God's plan – no matter the circumstances

"Hear us, O our God, for we are despised. Turn their insults back on their own heads. Give them over as plunder in a land of captivity. Do not cover up their guilt or blot out their sins from your sight, for they have thrown insults in the face of the builders. So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart.
(Nehemiah 4:4-6),NIV

Tactic #2: The enemy will bring _DISTRACTIONS_ to get our eyes off God and His plan

"But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the men of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem's walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry. They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it."
(Nehemiah 4: 7-8),NIV

Response #2: We must be _WATCHFUL_ and alert in prayer to remain focused

"But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat."
(Nehemiah 4:9),NIV

Tactic #3: The enemy will seek to _DISCOURAGE_ us using those we thought were "on our side"

"Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, 'The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall.' Also our enemies said, 'Before they know it or see us, we will be right there among them and will kill them and put an end to the work.' Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, 'Wherever you turn, they will attack us.'"
(Nehemiah 4: 10-12),NIV

Response #3a: We must _PARTNER_ with those who are committed to the same task with the same vision.

"Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows." (Nehemiah 4:13),NIV

Response #3b: We must keep life in _PERSPECTIVE_

"After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, 'Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.'"
(Nehemiah 4:14),NIV

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